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With an Etching by W. HOLMAN HUNT.

The Germ:

Thoughts towards Nature

In Poetry, Literature, and Art.

When whoso merely hath a little thought
Will plainly think the thought which is in him,—
Not imaging another's bright or dim,
Not mangling with new words what others taught;
When whoso speaks, from having either sought
Or only found,—will speak, not just to skim
A shallow surface with words made and trim,
But in that very speech the matter brought:
Be not too keen to cry—"So this is all!—
A thing I might myself have thought as well,
But would not say it, for it was not worth!"
Ask: "Is this truth?" For is it still to tell
That, be the theme a point or the whole earth,
Truth is a circle, perfect, great or small?

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W. HOLMAN HUNT

My Beautiful Lady.

I LOVE my lady; she is very fair;
Her brow is white, and bound by simple hair;
Her spirit sits aloof, and high,
Altho' it looks thro' her soft eye
Sweetly and tenderly.

As a young forest, when the wind drives thro',
My life is stirred when she breaks on my view.
Altho' her beauty has such power,
Her soul is like the simple flower
Trembling beneath a shower.

As bliss of saints, when dreaming of large wings,
The bloom around her fancied presence flings,
I feast and wile her absence, by
Pressing her choice hand passionately—
Imagining her sigh.

My lady's voice, altho' so very mild,
Maketh me feel as strong wine would a child;
My lady's touch, however slight,
Moves all my senses with its might,
Like to a sudden fright.

A hawk poised high in air, whose nerved wing-tips
Tremble with might suppressed, before he dips,—
In vigilance, not more intense
Than I; when her word's gentle sense
Makes full-eyed my suspense.

Her mention of a thing—august or poor,
Makes it seem nobler than it was before:
As where the sun strikes, life will gush,
And what is pale receive a flush,
Rich hues—a richer blush.

My lady's name, if I hear strangers use,—
Not meaning her—seems like a lax misuse.
I love none but my lady's name;
Rose, Maud, or Grace, are all the same,
So blank, so very tame.

My lady walks as I have seen a swan
Swim thro' the water just where the sun shone.
There ends of willow branches ride,
Quivering with the current's glide,
By the deep river-side.

Whene'er she moves there are fresh beauties stirred;
As the sunned bosom of a humming-bird
At each pant shows some fiery hue,
Burns gold, intensest green or blue:
The same, yet ever new.

What time she walketh under flowering May,
I am quite sure the scented blossoms say,
"O lady with the sunlit hair!
"Stay, and drink our odorous air—
"The incense that we bear:

"Your beauty, lady, we would ever shade;
"Being near you, our sweetness might not fade."
If trees could be broken-hearted,
I am sure that the green sap smarted,
When my lady parted.

This is why I thought weeds were beautiful;—
Because one day I saw my lady pull
Some weeds up near a little brook,
Which home most carefully she took,
Then shut them in a book.

A deer when startled by the stealthy ounce,—
A bird escaping from the falcon's trounce,
Feels his heart swell as mine, when she
Stands statelier, expecting me,
Than tall white lilies be.

The first white flutter of her robe to trace,
Where binds and perfumed jasmine interlace,
Expands my gaze triumphantly:
Even such his gaze, who sees on high
His flag, for victory.

We wander forth unconsciously, because
The azure beauty of the evening draws:
When sober hues pervade the ground,
And life in one vast hush seems drowned,
Air stirs so little sound.

We thread a copse where frequent bramble spray
With loose obtrusion from the side roots stray,
(Forcing sweet pauses on our walk):
I'll lift one with my foot, and talk
About its leaves and stalk.

Or may be that the prickles of some stem
Will hold a prisoner her long garment's hem;
To disentangle it I kneel,
Oft wounding more than I can heal;
It makes her laugh, my zeal.

Then on before a thin-legged robin hops,
Or leaping on a twig, he pertly stops,
Speaking a few clear notes, till nigh
We draw, when quickly he will fly
Into a bush close by.

A flock of goldfinches may stop their flight,
And wheeling round a birchen tree alight
Deep in its glittering leaves, until
They see us, when their swift rise will
Startle a sudden thrill.

I recollect my lady in a wood,
Keeping her breath and peering—(firm she stood
Her slim shape balanced on tiptoe—)
Into a nest which lay below,
Leaves shadowing her brow.

I recollect my lady asking me,
What that sharp tapping in the wood might be?
I told her blackbirds made it, which,
For slimy morsels they count rich,
Cracked the snail's curling niche:

She made no answer. When we reached the stone
Where the shell fragments on the grass were strewn,
Close to the margin of a rill;
"The air," she said, "seems damp and chill,
"We'll go home if you will."

"Make not my pathway dull so soon," I cried,
"See how those vast cloudpiles in sun-glow dyed,
"Roll out their splendour: while the breeze
"Lifts gold from leaf to leaf, as these
"Ash saplings move at ease."

Piercing the silence in our ears, a bird
Threw some notes up just then, and quickly stirred
The covert birds that startled, sent
Their music thro' the air; leaves lent
Their rustling and blent,

Until the whole of the blue warmth was filled
So much with sun and sound, that the air thrilled.
She gleamed, wrapt in the dying day's
Glory: altho' she spoke no praise,
I saw much in her gaze.

Then, flushed with resolution, I told all;—
The mighty love I bore her,—how would pall
My very breath of life, if she
For ever breathed not hers with me;—
Could I a cherub be,

How, idly hoping to enrich her grace,
I would snatch jewels from the orbs of space;—
Then back thro' the vague distance beat,
Glowing with joy her smile to meet,
And heap them round her feet.

Her waist shook to my arm. She bowed her head,
Silent, with hands clasped and arms straightened:
(Just then we both heard a church bell)
O God! It is not right to tell:
But I remember well

Each breast swelled with its pleasure, and her whole
Bosom grew heavy with love; the swift roll
Of new sensations dimmed her eyes,
Half closing them in ecstacies,
Turned full against the skies.

The rest is gone; it seemed a whirling round—
No pressure of my feet upon the ground:
But even when parted from her, bright
Showed all; yea, to my throbbing sight
The dark was starred with light.

Of my Lady.

In Death.

All seems a painted show. I look
Up thro' the bloom that's shed
By leaves above my head,
And feel the earnest life forsook
All being, when she died :—
My heart halts, hot and dried
As the parched course where once a brook
Thro' fresh growth used to flow,—
Because her past is now
No more than stories in a printed book.

The grass has grown above that breast,
Now cold and sadly still,
My happy face felt thrill :—
Her mouth's mere tones so much expressed !
Those lips are now close set,—
Lips which my own have met ;
Her eyelids by the earth are pressed ;
Damp earth weighs on her eyes ;
Damp earth shuts out the skies.
My lady rests her heavy, heavy rest.

To see her slim perfection sweep,
Trembling impatiently,
With eager gaze at me !
Her feet spared little things that creep :—
" We've no more right," she'd say,
" In this the earth than they."
Some remember it but to weep.
Her hand's slight weight was such,
Care lightened with its touch ;
My lady sleeps her heavy, heavy sleep.

My day-dreams hovered round her brow ;
Now o'er its perfect forms
Go softly real worms.
Stern death, it was a cruel blow,
To cut that sweet girl's life
Sharply, as with a knife.
Cursed life that lets me live and grow,
Just as a poisonous root,
From which rank blossoms shoot ;
My lady's laid so very, very low.

Dread power, grief cries aloud, "unjust,"—
To let her young life play
Its easy, natural way ;
Then, with an unexpected thrust,
Strike out the life you lent,
Just when her feelings blent
With those around whom she saw trust
Her willing power to bless,
For their whole happiness ;
My lady moulders into common dust.

Small birds twitter and peck the weeds
That wave above her head,
Shading her lowly bed :
Their brisk wings burst light globes of seeds,
Scattering the downy pride
Of dandelions, wide :
Speargrass stoops with watery beads :
The weight from its fine tips
Occasionally drips :
The bee drops in the mallow-bloom, and feeds.

About her window, at the dawn,
From the vine's crooked boughs
Birds chirupped an arouse :
Flies, buzzing, strengthened with the morn ;—
She'll not hear them again
At random strike the pane :
No more upon the close-cut lawn,
Her garment's sun-white hem
Bend the prim daisy's stem,
In walking forth to view what flowers are born.

No more she'll watch the dark-green rings
Stained quaintly on the lea,
To image fairy glee ;
While thro' dry grass a faint breeze sings,
And swarms of insects revel
Along the sultry level :—
No more will watch their brilliant wings,
Now lightly dip, now soar,
Then sink, and rise once more.
My lady's death makes dear these trivial things.

Within a huge tree's steady shade,
When resting from our walk,
How pleasant was her talk !
Elegant deer leaped o'er the glade,
Or stood with wide bright eyes,
Staring a short surprise :
Outside the shadow cows were laid,
Chewing with drowsy eye
Their cuds complacently :
Dim for sunshine drew near a milking-maid.

Rooks cawed and labored thro' the heat ;
Each wing-flap seemed to make
Their weary bodies ache :
The swallows, tho' so very fleet,
Made breathless pauses there
At something in the air :—
All disappeared : our pulses beat
Distincter throbs : then each
Turned and kissed, without speech,—
She trembling, from her mouth down to her feet.

My head sank on her bosom's heave,
So close to the soft skin
I heard the life within.
My forehead felt her coolly breathe,
As with her breath it rose :
To perfect my repose
Her two arms clasped my neck. The eve
Spread silently around,
A hush along the ground,
And all sound with the sunlight seemed to leave.

By my still gaze she must have known
The mighty bliss that filled
My whole soul, for she thrilled,
Drooping her face, flushed, on my own;
I felt that it was such
By its light warmth of touch.
My lady was with me alone:
That vague sensation brought
More real joy than thought.
I am without her now, truly alone.

We had no heed of time: the cause
Was that our minds were quite
Absorbed in our delight,
Silently blessed. Such stillness awes,
And stops with doubt, the breath,
Like the mute doom of death.
I felt Time's instantaneous pause;
An instant, on my eye
Flashed all Eternity:—
I started, as if clutched by wild beasts' claws,

Awakened from some dizzy swoon:
I felt strange vacant fears,
With singings in my ears,
And wondered that the pallid moon
Swung round the dome of night
With such tremendous might.
A sweetness, like the air of June,
Next paled me with suspense,
A weight of clinging sense—
Some hidden evil would burst on me soon.

My lady's love has passed away,
To know that it is so
To me is living woe.
That body lies in cold decay,
Which held the vital soul
When she was my life's soul.
Bitter mockery it was to say—
"Our souls are as the same:"
My words now sting like shame;
Her spirit went, and mine did not obey.

It was as if a fiery dart
Passed seething thro' my brain
When I beheld her lain
There whence in life she did not part.
Her beauty by degrees,
Sank, sharpened with disease :
The heavy sinking at her heart
Sucked hollows in her cheek,
And made her eyelids weak,
Tho' oft they'd open wide with sudden start.

The deathly power in silence drew
My lady's life away.
I watched, dumb with dismay,
The shock of thrills that quivered thro'
And tightened every limb :
For grief my eyes grew dim ;
More near, more near, the moment grew.
O horrible suspense !
O giddy impotence !
I saw her fingers lax, and change their hue.

Her gaze, grown large with fate, was cast
Where my mute agonies
Made more sad her sad eyes :
Her breath caught with short plucks and fast :—
Then one hot choking strain.
She never breathed again :
I had the look which was her last :
Even after breath was gone,
Her love one moment shone,—
Then slowly closed, and hope for ever passed.

Silence seemed to start in space
When first the bell's harsh toll
Rang for my lady's soul.
Vitality was hell ; her grace
The shadow of a dream :
Things then did scarcely seem :
Oblivion's stroke fell like a mace :
As a tree that's just hewn
I dropped, in a dead swoon,
And lay a long time cold upon my face.

Earth had one quarter turned before
My miserable fate
Pressed on with its whole weight.
My sense came back; and, shivering o'er,
I felt a pain to bear
The sun's keen cruel glare;
It seemed not warm as heretofore.
Oh, never more its rays
Will satisfy my gaze.
No more; no more; oh, never any more.

The Love of Beauty.

(Sonnet.)

John Boccaccio, love's own squire, deep sworn
In service to all beauty, joy, and rest,—
When first the love-earned royal Mary press'd,
To her smooth cheek, his pale brows, passion-worn,—
'Tis said, he, by her grace nigh frenzied, torn
By longings unattainable, address'd
To his chief friend most strange misgivings, lest
Some madness in his brain had thence been born.
The artist-mind alone can feel his meaning:—
Such as have watched the battle-rank'd array
Of sunset, or the face of girlhood seen in
Line-blending twilight, with sick hope. Oh! they
May feed desire on some fond bosom leaning:
But where shall such their thirst of Nature stay?

The Subject in Art.

(No. 1.)

If Painting and Sculpture delight us like other works of ingenuity, merely from the difficulties they surmount; like an 'egg in a bottle,' a tree made out of stone, or a face made of pigment; and the pleasure we receive, is our wonder at the achievement; then, to such as so believe, this treatise is not written. But if, as the writer conceives, works of Fine Art delight us by the interest the objects they depict excite in the beholder, just as those objects in nature would excite his interest; if by any association of ideas in the one case, by the same in the other, without reference to the representations being other than the objects they represent:—then, to such as so believe, the following upon 'Subject' is addressed. Whilst, at the same time, it is not disallowed that a subsequent pleasure may and does result, upon reflecting that the objects contemplated were the work of human ingenuity.

Now the subject to be treated, is the 'subject' of Painter and Sculptor; what ought to be the nature of that 'subject,' how far that subject may be drawn from past or present time with advantage, how far the subject may tend to confer upon its embodiment the title, 'High Art,' how far the subject may tend to confer upon its embodiment the title 'Low Art;' what is 'High Art,' what is 'Low Art'?

To begin then (at the end) with 'High Art.' However we may differ as to facts, the principle will be readily granted, that 'High Art,' *i. e.* Art, par excellence, Art, in its most exalted character, addresses pre-eminently the highest attributes of man, viz.: his mental and his moral faculties.

'Low Art,' or Art in its less exalted character, is that which addresses the less exalted attributes of man, viz.: his mere sensory faculties, without affecting the mind or heart, excepting through the volitional agency of the observer.

These definitions are too general and simple to be disputed; but before we endeavour to define more particularly, let us analyze the subject, and see what it will yield.

All the works which remain to us of the Ancients, and this appears somewhat remarkable, are, with the exception of those by incompetent artists, universally admitted to be 'High Art.' Now do we afford them this high title, because all remnants of the antique world, by tempting a comparison between what was, and is, will set the mental faculties at work, and thus address the

highest attributes of man? Or, as this is owing to the agency of the observer, and not to the subject represented, are we to seek for the cause in the subjects themselves!

Let us examine the subjects. They are mostly in sculpture; but this cannot be the cause, unless all modern sculpture be considered 'High Art.' This is leaving out of the question in both ages, all works badly executed, and obviously incorrect, of which there are numerous examples both ancient and modern.

The subjects we find in sculpture are, in "the round," mostly men or women in thoughtful or impassioned action: sometimes they are indeed acting physically; but then, as in the Jason adjusting his Sandal, acting by mechanical impulse, and thinking or looking in another direction. In relievo we have an historical combat, such as that between the Centaurs and Lapithæ; sometimes a group in conversation, sometimes a recitation of verses to the Lyre; a dance, or religious procession.

As to the first class in "the round," as they seem to appeal to the intellectual, and often to the moral faculties, they are naturally, and according to the broad definition, works of 'High Art.' Of the relievo, the historical combat appeals to the passions; and, being historical, probably to the intellect. The like may be said of the conversational groups, and lyrical recitation which follow. The dance appeals to the passions and the intellect; since the intellect recognises therein an order and design, her own planning; while the solemn, modest demeanour in the religious procession speaks to the heart and the mind. The same remarks will apply to the few ancient paintings we possess, always excluding such merely decorative works as are not fine art at all.

Thus it appears that all these works of the ancients *might* rationally have been denominated works of 'High Art;' and here we remark the difference between the hypothetical or rational, and the historical account of facts; for though here is *reason* enough why ancient art *might* have been denominated 'High Art,' that it *was* so denominated on this account, is a position not capable of proof: whereas, in all probability, the true account of the matter runs thus—The works of antiquity awe us by their time-hallowed presence; the mind is sent into a serious contemplation of things; and, the subject itself in nowise contravening, we attribute all this potent effect to the agency of the subject before us, and 'High Art,' it becomes *then* and *for ever*, with all such as "follow its cut." But then as this was so named, not from the abstract cause, but from a result and effect; when a *new* work is produced in a similar spirit, but clothed in a dissimilar matter, and the critics have to settle to what class

of art it belongs,—then is the new work dragged up to fight with the old one, like the poor beggar Irus in front of Ulysses; then are they turned over and applied, each to each, like the two triangles in Euclid; and then, if they square, fit and tally in every quarter—with the nude to the draped in the one, as the nude to the draped in the other—with the standing to the sitting in the one, as the standing to the sitting in the other—with the fat to the lean in the one, as the fat to the lean in the other—with the young to the old in the one, as the young to the old in the other—with head to body, as head to body; and nose to knee, as nose to knee, &c. &c., (and the critics have done a great deal)—then is the work oracularly pronounced one of 'High Art;' and the obsequious artist is pleased to consider it is.

But if, per contra, as in the former case, the works are not to be literally reconciled, though wrought in the self-same spirit; then this unfortunate creature of genius is degraded into a lower rank of art; and the artist, if he have faith in the learned, despairs; or, if he have none, he *swears*. But listen, an artist speaks: "If I have genius to produce a work in the true spirit of high art, and yet am so ignorant of its principles, that I scarce know whereon the success of the work depends, and scarcely whether I have succeeded or no; with this ignorance and this power, what needs your knowledge or your reasoning, seeing that nature is all-sufficient, and produces a painter as she produces a plant?" To the artist (the last of his race), who spoke thus, it is answered, that science is not meant for him, if he like it not, seeing he can do without it, and seeing, moreover, that with it *alone* he can never do. Science here does not make; it unmakes, wonderingly to find the making of what God has made,—of what God has made through the poet, leading him blindly by a path which he has not known; this path science follows slowly and in wonder. But though science is not to make the artist, there is no reason in nature that the artist reject it. Still, science is properly the birthright of the critic; 'tis his all in all. It shows him poets, painters, sculptors, his fellow men, often his inferiors in their want of it, his superiors in the ability to do what he cannot do; it teaches him to love them as angels bringing him food which *he* cannot attain, and to venerate their works as a gift from the Creator.

But to return to the critical errors relating to 'High Art.' While the constituents of high art were unknown, whilst its abstract principles were unsought, and whilst it was only recognized in the concrete, the critics, certainly guilty of the most unpardonable blindness, blundered up to the masses of 'High Art,' left by

antiquity, saying, "there let us fix our observatory," and here came out perspective glass, and callipers and compasses; and here they made squares and triangles, and circles, and ellipses, for, said they, "this is 'High Art,' and this hath certain proportions;" then in the logic of their hearts, they continued, "all these proportions we know by admeasurement, whatsoever hath these is 'High Art,' whatsoever hath not, is 'Low Art.' This was as certain as the fact that the sun is a globe of glowing charcoal, because forsooth they both yield light and heat. Now if the phantom of a then embryon-electrician had arisen and told them that their "high art marbles possessed an electric influence, which, acting in the brain of the observer, would awake in him emotions of so exalted a character, that he forthwith, inevitably nodding at them, must utter the tremendous syllables 'High Art;'" he, the then embryon-electrician, from that age withheld to bless and irradiate the physiology of ours, would have done something more to the purpose than all the critics and the compasses.

Thus then we see, that the antique, however successfully it may have wrought, is not our model; for, according to that faith demanded at setting out, fine art delights us from its being the semblance of what in nature delights. Now, as the artist does not work by the instrumentality of rule and science, but mainly by an instinctive impulse; if he copy the antique, unable as he is to segregate the merely delectable matter, he must needs copy the whole, and thereby multiply models, which the casting-man can do equally well; whereas if he copy nature, with a like inability to distinguish that delectable attribute which allures him to copy her, and under the same necessity of copying the whole, to make sure of this "tenant of nowhere;" we then have the artist, the instructed of nature, fulfilling his natural capacity, while his works we have as manifold yet various as nature's own thoughts for her children.

But reverting to the subject, it was stated at the beginning that 'Fine Art' delights, by presenting us with objects, which in nature delight us; and 'High Art' was defined, that which addresses the intellect; and hence it might appear, as delight is an emotion of the mind, that 'Low Art,' which addresses the senses, is not Fine Art at all. But then it must be remembered, that it was neither stated of 'Fine Art,' nor of 'High Art,' that it always delights; and again, that delight is not entirely mental. To point out the confines of high and low art, where the one terminates and the other commences, would be difficult, if not impracticable without sub-defining or circumscribing the import of the terms, pain, pleasure, delight, sensory, mental, psychical, intellectual, objective,

subjective, &c. &c.; and then, as little or nothing would be gained mainly pertinent to the subject, it must be content to receive no better definitions than those broad ones already laid down, with their latitude somewhat corrected by practical examples. Yet before proceeding to give these examples, it might be remarked of 'High Art,' that it always might, if it do not always excite some portion of delight, irrespective of that subsequent delight consequent upon the examination of a curiosity; that its function is sometimes, with this portion of delight, to commingle grief or distress, and that it may, (though this is *not* its function,) excite mental anguish, and by a reflex action, actual bodily pain. Now then to particularize, by example; let us suppose a perfect and correct painting of a stone, a common stone such as we walk over. Now although this subject might to a religious man, suggest a text of scripture; and to the geologist a theory of scientific interest; yet its general effect upon the average number of observers will be readily allowed to be more that of wonder or admiration at a triumph over the apparently impossible (to make a round stone upon a flat piece of canvass) than at aught else the subject possesses. Now a subject such as this belongs to such very low art, that it narrowly illudes precipitation over the confines of Fine Art; yet, that it is Fine Art is indisputable, since no mere mechanic artisan, or other than one specially gifted by nature, could produce it. This then shall introduce us to "Subject." This subject then, standing where fine art gradually confines with mechanic art, and almost midway between them; of no use nor beauty; but to be wondered at as a curiosity; is a subject of scandalous import to the artist, to the artist thus gifted by nature with a talent to reproduce her fleeting and wondrous forms. But if, as the writer doubts, nature could afford a monster so qualified for a poet, yet destitute of poetical genius; then the scandal attaches if he attempt a step in advance, or neglect to join himself to those, a most useful class of mechanic artists, who illustrate the sciences by drawing and diagram.

But as the subject supposed is one never treated in painting; only instanced, in fact, to exemplify an extreme; let us consider the merits of a subject really practical, such as 'dead game,' or 'a basket of fruit;' and the first general idea such a subject will excite is simply that of *food*, 'something to eat.' For though fruit on the tree, or a pheasant in the air, is a portion of nature and properly belongs to the section, 'Landscape,' a division of art intellectual enough; yet gather the fruit or bring down the pheasant, and you presently bring down the poetry with it; and although Sterne could sentimentalize upon a dead ass; and though a dead

pheasant in the larder, or a dead sheep at a butcher's, may excite feelings akin to anything but good living; and though they may *there* be the excitive causes of poetical, nay, of moral reflexion; yet, see them on the canvass, and the first and uppermost idea will be that of '*Food*,' and how, in the name of decency, they ever came there. It will be vain to argue that gathered fruit is only nature under a certain phase, and that a dead sheep or a dead pheasant is only a dead animal like a dead ass—it will be pitiably vain and miserable sophistry, since we know that the dead pheasant in a picture will always be as *food*, while the same at the poulterer's will be but a dead pheasant.

For we have not one only, but numerous general ideas annexed to every object in nature. Thus one of the series may be that that object is matter, one that it is individual matter, one that it is animal matter, one that it is a bird, one that it is a pheasant, one that it is a dead pheasant, and one that it is food. Now, our general ideas or notions are not evoked in this order as each new object addresses the mind; but that general idea is *first* elicited which accords with the first or principal destination of the object: thus the first general idea of a cowry, to the Indian, is that of money, not of a shell; and our first general idea of a dead pheasant is that of food, whereas to a zoologist it might have a different effect: but this is the exception. But it was said, that a dead pheasant in a picture would always be as food, while the same at the poulterer's would be but a dead pheasant: what then becomes of the first general idea? It seems to be disposed of thus: at the first sight of the shop, the idea is that of food, and next (if you are not hungry, and poets never are), the mind will be attracted to the species of animal, and (unless hunger presses) you may be led on to moralize like Sterne: but, amongst pictures, where there is nothing else to excite the general ideas of food, this, whenever adverted to, must ever re-excite that idea; and hence it appears that these *esculent* subjects might be poetical enough if exhibited all together, *i.e.*, they must be surrounded with eatables, like a possibly-poetical-pheasant in a poulterer's shop.

Longer stress has been laid upon this subject, "Still Life," than would seem justified by its insignificance, but as this is a branch of art which has never aspired to be 'High Art,' it contains something definite in its character which makes it better worth the analysis than might appear at first sight; but still, as a latitude has been taken in the investigation which is ever unavoidable in the handling of such mercurial matter as poetry (where one must spread out a broad definition to catch it wherever it runs), and as this is ever

incomprehensible to such as are unaccustomed to abstract thinking, from the difficulty of educing a rule amidst an infinite array of exceptions, and of recognising a principle shrouded in the obscurity of conflicting details; it appears expedient, before pursuing the question, to reinforce the first broad elementary principles with what definite modification they may have acquired in their progress to this point in the argument, together with the additional data which may have resulted from analytic reference to other correlative matter.

First then, as Fine Art delights in proportion to the delectating interest of the objects it depicts, and, as subseqently stated, grieves or distresses in proportion as the objects are grievous or distressing, we have this resultant: "Fine Art *excites* in proportion to the excitor influence of the object;" and then, that "*fine art* excites either the sensory or the mental faculties, in a like proportion to the excitor properties of the objects respectively." Thus then we have, definitely stated, the powers or capabilities of *Fine Art*, as regulated and governed by the objects it selects, and the objects it selects making its subject. Now the question in hand is, "what the nature of that *subject* should be," but the *subject* must be according to what Fine Art proposes to effect; all then must depend upon this proposition. For if you propose that Fine Art shall excite sensual pleasure, then such objects as excite sensual pleasure should form the *subject* of Fine Art; and those which excite sensual pleasure in the highest degree, will form the *highest subject*—'High Art.' Or if you propose that Fine Art shall excite a physical energetic activity, by addressing the sensory organism, which is a phase of the former proposition, (for what are popularly called sensual pleasures, are only particular sensory excitements sought by a physical appetite, while this sensory-organic activity is physically appetent also,) then the subjects of art ought to be drawn from such objects as excite a general activity, such as field-sports, bull-fights, battles, executions, court pageants, conflagrations, murders; and those which most intensely excite this sensory-organic activity, by expressing most of physical human power or suffering, such as battles, executions, regality, murder, would afford the *highest subject* of Fine Art, and consequently these would be '*High Art.*' But if you propose (with the writer) that *Fine Art* shall regard the general happiness of man, by addressing those attributes which are *peculiarly human*, by exciting the activity of his rational and benevolent powers (and the writer would add, man's religious aspirations, but omits it as sufficiently evolvable from the proposition, and since some well-willing men cannot at present recognize man as a religious animal),

then the subject of Fine Art should be drawn from objects which address and excite the activity of man's rational and benevolent powers, such as :—acts of justice—of mercy—good government—order—acts of intellect—men obviously speaking or thinking abstract thoughts, as evinced by one speaking to another, and looking at, or indicating, a flower, or a picture, or a star, or by looking on the wall while speaking—or, if the scene be from a *good* play, or story, or other beneficent work, then not only of men in abstract thought or meditation, but, it may be, in simple conversation, or in passion—or a simple representation of a person in a play or story, as of Jacques, Ferdinand, or Cordelia ; or, in real life, portraits of those who are honestly beautiful ; or expressive of innocence, happiness, benevolence, or intellectuality, but not of gluttony, wantonness, anger, hatred, or malevolence, unless in some cases of justifiable satire—of histrionic or historic portraiture—landscape—natural phenomena—animals, not *indiscriminately*—in some cases, grand or beautiful buildings, even without figures—any scene on sea or land which induces reflection—all subjects from such parts of history as are morally or intellectually instructive or attractive—and therefore pageants—battles—and *even* executions—all forms of thought and poetry, however wild, if consistent with rational benevolence—all scenes serious or comic, domestic or historical—all religious subjects proposing good that will not shock any reasonable number of reasonable men—all subjects that leave the artist wiser and happier—and none which intrinsically act otherwise—to sum all, every thing or incident in nature which excites, or may be made to excite, the mind and the heart of man as a mentally intelligent, not as a brute animal, is a subject for Fine Art, at all times, in all places, and in all ages. But as all these subjects in nature affect our hearts or our understandings in proportion to the heart and understanding we have to apprehend and to love them, those will excite us most intensely which we know most of and love most. But as we may learn to know them all and to love them all, and what is dark to-day may be luminous to-morrow, and things, dumb to-day, to-morrow grow voiceful, and the strange voice of to-day be plain and reproach us to-morrow ; who shall adventure to say that this or that is highest ? And if it appear that all these subjects in nature *may* affect us with equal intensity, and that the artist's representations affect as the subjects affect, then it follows, with all these subjects, Fine Art may affect us equally ; but the subjects may all be high ; therefore, all Fine Art may be High Art.

The Seasons.

The crocus, in the shrewd March morn,
Thrusts up his saffron spear;
And April dots the sombre thorn
With gems, and loveliest cheer.

Then sleep the seasons, full of might;
While slowly swells the pod,
And rounds the peach, and in the night
The mushroom bursts the sod.

The winter comes: the frozen rut
Is bound with silver bars;
The white drift heaps against the hut;
And night is pierced with stars.

Dream Land.

Where sunless rivers weep
Their waves into the deep,
She sleeps a charmed sleep;
Awake her not.
Led by a single star,
She came from very far,
To seek where shadows are
Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
She left the fields of corn,
For twilight cold and lorn,
And water-springs.
Thro' sleep, as thro' a veil,
She sees the sky look pale,
And hears the nightingale,
That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest,
Shed over brow and breast;
Her face is toward the west,
The purple land.
She cannot see the grain
Ripening on hill and plain;
She cannot feel the rain
Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore
Upon a mossy shore,
Rest, rest, that shall endure,
Till time shall cease;—
Sleep that no pain shall wake,
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
Her perfect peace.

Songs of One Household.

No. 1.

My Sister's Sleep.

She fell asleep on Christmas Eve.
Upon her eyes' most patient calms
The lids were shut; her uplaid arms
Covered her bosom, I believe.

Our mother, who had leaned all day
Over the bed from chime to chime,
Then raised herself for the first time,
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread
With work to finish. For the glare
Made by her candle, she had care
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a good moon up,
Which left its shadows far within;
The depth of light that it was in
Seemed hollow like an altar-cup.

Through the small room, with subtle sound
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove
And reddened. In its dim alcove
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,
And my tir'd mind felt weak and blank;
Like a sharp strengthening wine, it drank
The stillness and the broken lights.

Silence was speaking at my side
With an exceedingly clear voice:
I knew the calm as of a choice
Made in God for me, to abide.

I said, "Full knowledge does not grieve:
This which upon my spirit dwells
Perhaps would have been sorrow else:
But I am glad 'tis Christmas Eve."

Twelve struck. That sound, which all the years
Hear in each hour, crept off; and then
The ruffled silence spread again,
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat.
  Her needles, as she laid them down,
  Met lightly, and her silken gown
Settled: no other noise than that.

"Glory unto the Newly Born!"
  So, as said angels, she did say;
  Because we were in Christmas-day,
Though it would still be long till dawn.

She stood a moment with her hands
  Kept in each other, praying much;
  A moment that the soul may touch
But the heart only understands.

Almost unwittingly, my mind
  Repeated her words after her;
  Perhaps tho' my lips did not stir;
It was scarce thought, or cause assign'd.

Just then in the room over us
  There was a pushing back of chairs,
  As some who had sat unawares
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

Anxious, with softly stepping haste,
  Our mother went where Margaret lay,
  Fearing the sounds o'erhead—should they
Have broken her long-watched for rest!

She stooped an instant, calm, and turned;
  But suddenly turned back again;
  And all her features seemed in pain
With woe, and her eyes gazed and yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,
  And held my breath, and spake no word:
  There was none spoken; but *I heard*
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept.
  And both my arms fell, and I said:
  "God knows I knew that she was dead."
And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn
  A little after twelve o'clock
  We said, ere the first quarter struck,
"Christ's blessing on the newly born!"

Hand and Soul.

"Rivolsimi in quel lato
Là 'nde venia la voce,
E parvemi una luce
Che lucea quanto stella:
La mia mente era quella."

Bonaggiunta Urbiciani, (1250.)

Before any knowledge of painting was brought to Florence, there were already painters in Lucca, and Pisa, and Arezzo, who feared God and loved the art. The keen, grave workmen from Greece, whose trade it was to sell their own works in Italy and teach Italians to imitate them, had already found rivals of the soil with skill that could forestall their lessons and cheapen their crucifixes and *addolorate*, more years than is supposed before the art came at all into Florence. The pre-eminence to which Cimabue was raised at once by his contemporaries, and which he still retains to a wide extent even in the modern mind, is to be accounted for, partly by the circumstances under which he arose, and partly by that extraordinary *purpose of fortune* born with the lives of some few, and through which it is not a little thing for any who went before, if they are even remembered as the shadows of the coming of such an one, and the voices which prepared his way in the wilderness. It is thus, almost exclusively, that the painters of whom I speak are now known. They have left little, and but little heed is taken of that which men hold to have been surpassed; it is gone like time gone —a track of dust and dead leaves that merely led to the fountain.

Nevertheless, of very late years, and in very rare instances, some signs of a better understanding have become manifest. A case in point is that of the tryptic and two cruciform pictures at Dresden, by Chiaro di Messer Bello dell' Erma, to which the eloquent pamphlet of Dr. Aemmster has at length succeeded in attracting the students. There is another still more solemn and beautiful work, now proved to be by the same hand, in the gallery at Florence. It is the one to which my narrative will relate.

This Chiaro dell' Erma was a young man of very honorable family in Arezzo; where, conceiving art almost, as it were, for himself, and loving it deeply, he endeavoured from early boyhood towards the imitation of any objects offered in nature. The extreme longing after a visible embodiment of his thoughts strengthened as his years increased, more even than his sinews or the blood of his life; until

he would feel faint in sunsets and at the sight of stately persons. When he had lived nineteen years, he heard of the famous Giunta Pisano; and, feeling much of admiration, with, perhaps, a little of that envy which youth always feels until it has learned to measure success by time and opportunity, he determined that he would seek out Giunta, and, if possible, become his pupil.

Having arrived in Pisa, he clothed himself in humble apparel, being unwilling that any other thing than the desire he had for knowledge should be his plea with the great painter; and then, leaving his baggage at a house of entertainment, he took his way along the street, asking whom he met for the lodging of Giunta. It soon chanced that one of that city, conceiving him to be a stranger and poor, took him into his house, and refreshed him; afterwards directing him on his way.

When he was brought to speech of Giunta, he said merely that he was a student, and that nothing in the world was so much at his heart as to become that which he had heard told of him with whom he was speaking. He was received with courtesy and consideration, and shewn into the study of the famous artist. But the forms he saw there were lifeless and incomplete; and a sudden exultation possessed him as he said within himself, "I am the master of this man." The blood came at first into his face, but the next moment he was quite pale and fell to trembling. He was able, however, to conceal his emotion; speaking very little to Giunta, but, when he took his leave, thanking him respectfully.

After this, Chiaro's first resolve was, that he would work out thoroughly some one of his thoughts, and let the world know him. But the lesson which he had now learned, of how small a greatness might win fame, and how little there was to strive against, served to make him torpid, and rendered his exertions less continual. Also Pisa was a larger and more luxurious city than Arezzo; and, when in his walks, he saw the great gardens laid out for pleasure, and the beautiful women who passed to and fro, and heard the music that was in the groves of the city at evening, he was taken with wonder that he had never claimed his share of the inheritance of those years in which his youth was cast. And women loved Chiaro; for, in despite of the burthen of study, he was well-favoured and very manly in his walking; and, seeing his face in front, there was a glory upon it, as upon the face of one who feels a light round his hair.

So he put thought from him, and partook of his life. But, one night, being in a certain company of ladies, a gentleman that was there with him began to speak of the paintings of a youth named

Bonaventura, which he had seen in Lucca; adding that Giunta Pisano might now look for a rival. When Chiaro heard this, the lamps shook before him, and the music beat in his ears and made him giddy. He rose up, alleging a sudden sickness, and went out of that house with his teeth set.

He now took to work diligently; not returning to Arezzo, but remaining in Pisa, that no day more might be lost; only living entirely to himself. Sometimes, after nightfall, he would walk abroad in the most solitary places he could find; hardly feeling the ground under him, because of the thoughts of the day which held him in fever.

The lodging he had chosen was in a house that looked upon gardens fast by the Church of San Rocco. During the offices, as he sat at work, he could hear the music of the organ and the long murmur that the chanting left; and if his window were open, sometimes, at those parts of the mass where there is silence throughout the church, his ear caught faintly the single voice of the priest. Beside the matters of his art and a very few books, almost the only object to be noticed in Chiaro's room was a small consecrated image of St. Mary Virgin wrought out of silver, before which stood always, in summer-time, a glass containing a lily and a rose.

It was here, and at this time, that Chiaro painted the Dresden pictures; as also, in all likelihood, the one—inferior in merit, but certainly his—which is now at Munich. For the most part, he was calm and regular in his manner of study; though often he would remain at work through the whole of a day, not resting once so long as the light lasted; flushed, and with the hair from his face. Or, at times, when he could not paint, he would sit for hours in thought of all the greatness the world had known from of old; until he was weak with yearning, like one who gazes upon a path of stars.

He continued in this patient endeavour for about three years, at the end of which his name was spoken throughout all Tuscany. As his fame waxed, he began to be employed, besides easel-pictures, upon paintings in fresco: but I believe that no traces remain to us of any of these latter. He is said to have painted in the Duomo: and D'Agincourt mentions having seen some portions of a fresco by him which originally had its place above the high altar in the Church of the Certosa; but which, at the time he saw it, being very dilapidated, had been hewn out of the wall, and was preserved in the stores of the convent. Before the period of Dr. Aemmster's researches, however, it had been entirely destroyed.

Chiaro was now famous. It was for the race of fame that he had

girded up his loins; and he had not paused until fame was reached: yet now, in taking breath, he found that the weight was still at his heart. The years of his labour had fallen from him, and his life was still in its first painful desire.

With all that Chiaro had done during these three years, and even before, with the studies of his early youth, there had always been a feeling of worship and service. It was the peace-offering that he made to God and to his own soul for the eager selfishness of his aim. There was earth, indeed, upon the hem of his raiment; but *this* was of the heaven, heavenly. He had seasons when he could endure to think of no other feature of his hope than this: and sometimes, in the ecstacy of prayer, it had even seemed to him to behold that day when his mistress—his mystical lady (now hardly in her ninth year, but whose solemn smile at meeting had already lighted on his soul like the dove of the Trinity)—even she, his own gracious and holy Italian art—with her virginal bosom, and her unfathomable eyes, and the thread of sunlight round her brows—should pass, through the sun that never sets, into the circle of the shadow of the tree of life, and be seen of God, and found good: and then it had seemed to him, that he, with many who, since his coming, had joined the band of whom he was one (for, in his dream, the body he had worn on earth had been dead an hundred years), were permitted to gather round the blessed maiden, and to worship with her through all ages and ages of ages, saying, Holy, holy, holy. This thing he had seen with the eyes of his spirit; and in this thing had trusted, believing that it would surely come to pass.

But now, (being at length led to enquire closely into himself,) even as, in the pursuit of fame, the unrest abiding after attainment had proved to him that he had misinterpreted the craving of his own spirit—so also, now that he would willingly have fallen back on devotion, he became aware that much of that reverence which he had mistaken for faith had been no more than the worship of beauty. Therefore, after certain days passed in perplexity, Chiaro said within himself, "My life and my will are yet before me: I will take another aim to my life."

From that moment Chiaro set a watch on his soul, and put his hand to no other works but only to such as had for their end the presentment of some moral greatness that should impress the beholder: and, in doing this, he did not choose for his medium the action and passion of human life, but cold symbolism and abstract impersonation. So the people ceased to throng about his pictures as heretofore; and, when they were carried through town and town to their destination, they were no longer delayed by the crowds

eager to gaze and admire: and no prayers or offerings were brought to them on their path, as to his Madonnas, and his Saints, and his Holy Children. Only the critical audience remained to him; and, these, in default of more worthy matter, would have turned their scrutiny on a puppet or a mantle. Meanwhile, he had no more of fever upon him; but was calm and pale each day in all that he did and in his goings in and out. The works he produced at this time have perished—in all likelihood, not unjustly. It is said (and we may easily believe it), that, though more laboured than his former pictures, they were cold and unemphatic; bearing marked out upon them, as they must certainly have done, the measure of that boundary to which they were made to conform.

And the weight was still close at Chiaro's heart: but he held in his breath, never resting (for he was afraid), and would not know it.

Now it happened, within these days, that there fell a great feast in Pisa, for holy matters: and each man left his occupation; and all the guilds and companies of the city were got together for games and rejoicings. And there were scarcely any that stayed in the houses, except ladies who lay or sat along their balconies between open windows which let the breeze beat through the rooms and over the spread tables from end to end. And the golden cloths that their arms lay upon drew all eyes upward to see their beauty; and the day was long; and every hour of the day was bright with the sun.

So Chiaro's model, when he awoke that morning on the hot pavement of the Piazza Nunziata, and saw the hurry of people that passed him, got up and went along with them; and Chiaro waited for him in vain.

For the whole of that morning, the music was in Chiaro's room from the Church close at hand: and he could hear the sounds that the crowd made in the streets; hushed only at long intervals while the processions for the feast-day chanted in going under his windows. Also, more than once, there was a high clamour from the meeting of factious persons: for the ladies of both leagues were looking down; and he who encountered his enemy could not choose but draw upon him. Chiaro waited a long time idle; and then knew that his model was gone elsewhere. When at his work, he was blind and deaf to all else; but he feared sloth: for then his stealthy thoughts would begin, as it were, to beat round and round him, seeking a point for attack. He now rose, therefore, and went to the window. It was within a short space of noon; and underneath him a throng of people was coming out through the porch of San Rocco.

The two greatest houses of the feud in Pisa had filled the church for that mass. The first to leave had been the Gherghiotti; who, stopping on the threshold, had fallen back in ranks along each side of the archway: so that now, in passing outward, the Marotoli had to walk between two files of men whom they hated, and whose fathers had hated theirs. All the chiefs were there and their whole adherence; and each knew the name of each. Every man of the Marotoli, as he came forth and saw his foes, laid back his hood and gazed about him, to show the badge upon the close cap that held his hair. And of the Gherghiotti there were some who tightened their girdles; and some shrilled and threw up their wrists scornfully, as who flies a falcon; for that was the crest of their house.

On the walls within the entry were a number of tall, narrow frescoes, presenting a moral allegory of Peace, which Chiaro had painted that year for the Church. The Gherghiotti stood with their backs to these frescoes: and among them Golzo Ninuccio, the youngest noble of the faction, called by the people Golaghiotta, for his debased life. This youth had remained for some while talking listlessly to his fellows, though with his sleepy sunken eyes fixed on them who passed: but now, seeing that no man jostled another, he drew the long silver shoe off his foot, and struck the dust out of it on the cloak of him who was going by, asking him how far the tides rose at Viderza. And he said so because it was three months since, at that place, the Gherghiotti had beaten the Marotoli to the sands, and held them there while the sea came in; whereby many had been drowned. And, when he had spoken, at once the whole archway was dazzling with the light of confused swords; and they who had left turned back; and they who were still behind made haste to come forth: and there was so much blood cast up the walls on a sudden, that it ran in long streams down Chiaro's paintings.

Chiaro turned himself from the window; for the light felt dry between his lids, and he could not look. He sat down, and heard the noise of contention driven out of the church-porch and a great way through the streets; and soon there was a deep murmur that heaved and waxed from the other side of the city, where those of both parties were gathering to join in the tumult.

Chiaro sat with his face in his open hands. Once again he had wished to set his foot on a place that looked green and fertile; and once again it seemed to him that the thin rank mask was about to spread away, and that this time the chill of the water must leave leprosy in his flesh. The light still swam in his head, and bewil-

dered him at first; but when he knew his thoughts, they were these :—

"Fame failed me: faith failed me: and now this also,—the hope that I nourished in this my generation of men,—shall pass from me, and leave my feet and my hands groping. Yet, because of this, are my feet become slow and my hands thin. I am as one who, through the whole night, holding his way diligently, hath smitten the steel unto the flint, to lead some whom he knew darkling; who hath kept his eyes always on the sparks that himself made, lest they should fail; and who, towards dawn, turning to bid them that he had guided God speed, sees the wet grass untrodden except of his own feet. I am as the last hour of the day, whose chimes are a perfect number; whom the next followeth not, nor light ensueth from him; but in the same darkness is the old order begun afresh. Men say, 'This is not God nor man; he is not as we are, neither above us: let him sit beneath us, for we are many.' Where I write Peace, in that spot is the drawing of swords, and there men's footprints are red. When I would sow, another harvest is ripe. Nay, it is much worse with me than thus much. Am I not as a cloth drawn before the light, that the looker may not be blinded; but which sheweth thereby the grain of its own coarseness; so that the light seems defiled, and men say, 'We will not walk by it.' Wherefore through me they shall be doubly accursed, seeing that through me they reject the light. May one be a devil and not know it?"

As Chiaro was in these thoughts, the fever encroached slowly on his veins, till he could sit no longer, and would have risen; but suddenly he found awe within him, and held his head bowed, without stirring. The warmth of the air was not shaken; but there seemed a pulse in the light, and a living freshness, like rain. The silence was a painful music, that made the blood ache in his temples; and he lifted his face and his deep eyes.

A woman was present in his room, clad to the hands and feet with a green and grey raiment, fashioned to that time. It seemed that the first thoughts he had ever known were given him as at first from her eyes, and he knew her hair to be the golden veil through which he beheld his dreams. Though her hands were joined, her face was not lifted, but set forward; and though the gaze was austere, yet her mouth was supreme in gentleness. And as he looked, Chiaro's spirit appeared abashed of its own intimate presence, and his lips shook with the thrill of tears; it seemed such a bitter while till the spirit might be indeed alone.

She did not move closer towards him, but he felt her to be as much with him as his breath. He was like one who, scaling a

great steepness, hears his own voice echoed in some place much higher than he can see, and the name of which is not known to him. As the woman stood, her speech was with Chiaro: not, as it were, from her mouth or in his ears; but distinctly between them.

"I am an image, Chiaro, of thine own soul within thee. See me, and know me as I am. Thou sayest that fame has failed thee, and faith failed thee; but because at least thou hast not laid thy life unto riches, therefore, though thus late, I am suffered to come into thy knowledge. Fame sufficed not, for that thou didst seek fame: seek thine own conscience (not thy mind's conscience, but thine heart's), and all shall approve and suffice. For Fame, in noble soils, is a fruit of the Spring: but not therefore should it be said: 'Lo! my garden that I planted is barren: the crocus is here, but the lily is dead in the dry ground, and shall not lift the earth that covers it: therefore I will fling my garden together, and give it unto the builders.' Take heed rather that thou trouble not the wise secret earth; for in the mould that thou throwest up shall the first tender growth lie to waste; which else had been made strong in its season. Yea, and even if the year fall past in all its months, and the soil be indeed, to thee, peevish and incapable, and though thou indeed gather all thy harvest, and it suffice for others, and thou remain vext with emptiness; and others drink of thy streams, and the drouth rasp thy throat;—let it be enough that these have found the feast good, and thanked the giver: remembering that, when the winter is striven through, there is another year, whose wind is meek, and whose sun fulfilleth all."

While he heard, Chiaro went slowly on his knees. It was not to her that spoke, for the speech seemed within him and his own. The air brooded in sunshine, and though the turmoil was great outside, the air within was at peace. But when he looked in her eyes, he wept. And she came to him, and cast her hair over him, and, took her hands about his forehead, and spoke again:

"Thou hast said," she continued, gently, "that faith failed thee. This cannot be so. Either thou hadst it not, or thou hast it. But who bade thee strike the point betwixt love and faith? Wouldst thou sift the warm breeze from the sun that quickens it? Who bade thee turn upon God and say: "Behold, my offering is of earth, and not worthy: thy fire comes not upon it: therefore, though I slay not my brother whom thou acceptest, I will depart before thou smite me." Why shouldst thou rise up and tell God He is not content? Had He, of His warrant, certified so to thee? Be not nice to seek out division; but possess thy love in sufficiency: assuredly this is faith, for the heart must believe first. What He hath set in thine heart to do, that do thou; and even though thou do it

without thought of Him, it shall be well done: it is this sacrifice that He asketh of thee, and His flame is upon it for a sign. Think not of Him; but of His love and thy love. For God is no morbid exactor: He hath no hand to bow beneath, nor a foot, that thou shouldst kiss it."

And Chiaro held silence, and wept into her hair which covered his face; and the salt tears that he shed ran through her hair upon his lips; and he tasted the bitterness of shame.

Then the fair woman, that was his soul, spoke again to him, saying:

"And for this thy last purpose, and for those unprofitable truths of thy teaching,—thine heart hath already put them away, and it needs not that I lay my bidding upon thee. How is it that thou, a man, wouldst say coldly to the mind what God hath said to the heart warmly? Thy will was honest and wholesome; but look well lest this also be folly,—to say, 'I, in doing this, do strengthen God among men.' When at any time hath he cried unto thee, saying, 'My son, lend me thy shoulder, for I fall?' Deemest thou that the men who enter God's temple in malice, to the provoking of blood, and neither for his love nor for his wrath will abate their purpose,—shall afterwards stand with thee in the porch, midway between Him and themselves, to give ear unto thy thin voice, which merely the fall of their visors can drown, and to see thy hands, stretched feebly, tremble among their swords? Give thou to God no more than he asketh of thee; but to man also, that which is man's. In all that thou doest, work from thine own heart, simply; for his heart is as thine, when thine is wise and humble; and he shall have understanding of thee. One drop of rain is as another, and the sun's prism in all: and shalt not thou be as he, whose lives are the breath of One? Only by making thyself his equal can he learn to hold communion with thee, and at last own thee above him. Not till thou lean over the water shalt thou see thine image therein: stand erect, and it shall slope from thy feet and be lost. Know that there is but this means whereby thou may'st serve God with man:—Set thine hand and thy soul to serve man with God."

And when she that spoke had said these words within Chiaro's spirit, she left his side quietly, and stood up as he had first seen her; with her fingers laid together, and her eyes steadfast, and with the breadth of her long dress covering her feet on the floor. And, speaking again, she said:

"Chiaro, servant of God, take now thine Art unto thee, and paint me thus, as I am, to know me: weak, as I am, and in the weeds of this time; only with eyes which seek out labour, and with a faith, not learned, yet jealous of prayer. Do this; so shall thy soul stand before thee always, and perplex thee no more."

And Chiaro did as she bade him. While he worked, his face grew solemn with knowledge: and before the shadows had turned, his work was done. Having finished, he lay back where he sat, and was asleep immediately: for the growth of that strong sunset was heavy about him, and he felt weak and haggard; like one just come out of a dusk, hollow country, bewildered with echoes, where he had lost himself, and who has not slept for many days and nights. And when she saw him lie back, the beautiful woman came to him, and sat at his head, gazing, and quieted his sleep with her voice.

The tumult of the factions had endured all that day through all Pisa, though Chiaro had not heard it: and the last service of that Feast was a mass sung at midnight from the windows of all the churches for the many dead who lay about the city, and who had to be buried before morning, because of the extreme heats.

In the Spring of 1847 I was at Florence. Such as were there at the same time with myself—those, at least, to whom Art is something,—will certainly recollect how many rooms of the Pitti Gallery were closed through that season, in order that some of the pictures they contained might be examined, and repaired without the necessity of removal. The hall, the staircases, and the vast central suite of apartments, were the only accessible portions; and in these such paintings as they could admit from the sealed *penetralia* were profanely huddled together, without respect of dates, schools, or persons.

I fear that, through this interdict, I may have missed seeing many of the best pictures. I do not mean *only* the most talked of: for these, as they were restored, generally found their way somehow into the open rooms, owing to the clamours raised by the students; and I remember how old Ercoli's, the curator's, spectacles used to be mirrored in the reclaimed surface, as he leaned mysteriously over these works with some of the visitors, to scrutinize and elucidate.

One picture, that I saw that Spring, I shall not easily forget. It was among those, I believe, brought from the other rooms, and had been hung, obviously out of all chronology, immediately beneath that head by Raphael so long known as the "Berrettino," and now said to be the portrait of Cecco Ciulli.

The picture I speak of is a small one, and represents merely the figure of a woman, clad to the hands and feet with a green and grey raiment, chaste and early in its fashion, but exceedingly simple. She is standing: her hands are held together lightly, and her eyes set earnestly open.

The face and hands in this picture, though wrought with great delicacy, have the appearance of being painted at once, in a single sitting: the drapery is unfinished. As soon as I saw the figure, it drew an awe upon me, like water in shadow. I shall not attempt to describe it more than I have already done; for the most absorbing wonder of it was its literality. You knew that figure, when painted, had been seen; yet it was not a thing to be seen of men. This language will appear ridiculous to such as have never looked on the work; and it may be even to some among those who have. On examining it closely, I perceived in one corner of the canvass the words *Manus Animam pinxit*, and the date 1239.

I turned to my Catalogue, but that was useless, for the pictures were all displaced. I then stepped up to the Cavaliere Ercoli, who was in the room at the moment, and asked him regarding the

subject and authorship of the painting. He treated the matter, I thought, somewhat slightingly, and said that he could show me the reference in the Catalogue, which he had compiled. This, when found, was not of much value, as it merely said, "Schizzo d'autore incerto," adding the inscription.* I could willingly have prolonged my inquiry, in the hope that it might somehow lead to some result; but I had disturbed the curator from certain yards of Guido, and he was not communicative. I went back therefore, and stood before the picture till it grew dusk.

The next day I was there again; but this time a circle of students was round the spot, all copying the "Berrettino." I contrived, however, to find a place whence I could see *my* picture, and where I seemed to be in nobody's way. For some minutes I remained undisturbed; and then I heard, in an English voice: "Might I beg of you, sir, to stand a little more to this side, as you interrupt my view."

I felt vext, for, standing where he asked me, a glare struck on the picture from the windows, and I could not see it. However, the request was reasonably made, and from a countryman; so I complied, and turning away, stood by his easel. I knew it was not worth while; yet I referred in some way to the work underneath the one he was copying. He did not laugh, but he smiled as we do in England: "*Very* odd, is it not?" said he.

The other students near us were all continental; and seeing an Englishman select an Englishman to speak with, conceived, I suppose, that he could understand no language but his own. They had evidently been noticing the interest which the little picture appeared to excite in me.

One of them, an Italian, said something to another who stood next to him. He spoke with a Genoese accent, and I lost the sense in the villanous dialect. "Che so?" replied the other, lifting his eyebrows towards the figure; "roba mistica: 'st' Inglesi son matti sul misticismo: somiglia alle nebbie di là. Li fa pensare alla patria, "E intenerisce il core

Lo dì ch' han detto ai dolci amici adio."

"La notte, vuoi dire," said a third.

There was a general laugh. My compatriot was evidently a novice in the language, and did not take in what was said. I remained silent, being amused.

'Et toi donc?" said he who had quoted Dante, turning to a student, whose birthplace was unmistakable even had he been addressed in any other language: "que dis-tu de ce genre-là?"

"Moi?" returned the Frenchman, standing back from his easel, and looking at me and at the figure, quite politely, though with an evident reservation: "Je dis, mon cher, que c'est une spécialité dont je me fiche pas mal. Je tiens que quand on ne comprend pas une chose, c'est qu' elle ne signifie rien."

My reader thinks possibly that the French student was right.

* I should here say, that in the catalogue for the year just over, (owing, as in cases before mentioned, to the zeal and enthusiasm of Dr. Aemmster) this, and several other pictures, have been more competently entered. The work in question is now placed in the *Sala Sessagona*, a room I did not see—under the number 161. It is described as "Figura mistica di Chiaro dell' Erma," and there is a brief notice of the author appended.

Reviews.

The Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich: a Long-vacation Pastoral. By Arthur Hugh Clough. Oxford: Macpherson. London: Chapman and Hall.—1848.

THE critic who should undertake to speak of all the poetry which issues from the press of these present days, what is so called by courtesy as well as that which may claim the title as of right, would impose on himself a task demanding no little labor, and entailing no little disgust and weariness. Nor is the trouble well repaid. More profit will not accrue to him who studies, if the word can be used, fifty of a certain class of versifiers, than to him who glances over one: and, while a successful effort to warn such that poetry is not their proper sphere, and that they must seek elsewhere for a vocation to work out, might embolden a philanthropist to assume the position of scare-crow, and drive away the unclean birds from the flowers and the green leaves; on the other hand, the small results which appear to have hitherto attended such endeavors are calculated rather to induce those who have yet made, to relinquish them, than to lead others to follow in the same track. It is truly a disheartening task. To the critic himself no good, though some amusement occasionally, can be expected: to the criticised, good but rarely, for he is seldom convinced, and annoyance and rancour almost of course; and, even in those few cases where the voice crying "in the wilderness" produces its effect, the one thistle that abandons the attempt at bearing figs sees its neighbours still believing in their success, and soon has its own place filled up. The sentence of those who do not read is the best criticism on those who will not think.

It is acting on these considerations that we propose not to take count of any works that do not either show a purpose achieved or give promise of a worthy event; while of such we hope to overlook none.

We believe it may safely be assumed that at no previous period has the public been more buzzed round by triviality and common-place; but we hold firm, at the same time, that at none other has there been a greater or a grander body of genius, or so honorable a display of well cultivated taste and talent. Certainly the public do not seem to know this: certainly the critics deny it, or rather speak as though they never contemplated that such a position would be advanced: but, if the fact be so, it will make itself known, and the poets of this day will assert themselves, and take their places.

Of these it is our desire to speak truthfully, indeed, and without compromise, but always as bearing in mind that the inventor is more than the commentator, and the book more than the notes; and that, if it is we who speak, we do so not for ourselves, nor as of ourselves.

The work of Arthur Hugh Clough now before us, (we feel warranted in dropping the *Mr.* even at his first work,) unites the most enduring forms of nature, and the most unsophisticated conditions of life and character, with the technicalities of speech, of manners, and of persons of an Oxford reading party in the long vacation. His hero is

"Philip Hewson, the poet,
Hewson, the radical hot, hating lords and scorning ladies;"

and his heroine is no heroine, but a woman, "Elspie, the quiet, the brave."

The metre he has chosen, the hexametral, harmonises with the spirit of primitive simplicity in which the poem is conceived; is itself a background, as much as are "Knoydart, Croydart, Moydart, Morrer, and Ardnamurchan;" and gives a new individuality to the passages of familiar narrative and every day conversation. It has an intrinsic appropriateness; although, at first thought of the subject, this will, perhaps, be scarcely admitted of so old and so stately a rhythmical form.

As regards execution, however, there may be noted, in qualification of much pliancy and vigour, a certain air of experiment in occasional passages, and a license in versification, which more than warrants a warning "to expect every kind of irregularity in these modern hexameters." The following lines defy all efforts at reading in dactyls or spondees, and require an almost complete transposition of accent.

"There was a point which I forgot, which our gallant Highland homes [have;"—
"While the little drunken Piper came across to shake hands with [Lindsay:"—
"Something of the world, of men and women: you will not refuse me."

In the first of these lines, the omission of the former "*which*," would remove all objection; and there are others where a final syllable appears clearly deficient; as thus:—

"Only the road and larches and ruinous millstead between" [*them*]:—
"Always welcome the stranger: I may say, delighted to see [*such*]
Fine young men:"—
"Nay, never talk: listen now. What I say you can't apprehend" [*yet*]:—
"Laid her hand on her lap. Philip took it. She did not resist" [*him*]:—

Yet the following would be scarcely improved by greater exactness:

"Roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God;"

Nor, perhaps, ought this to be made correct:

"Close as the bodies and intertwining limbs of athletic wrestlers."

The aspect of *fact* pervading "the Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich," —(in English, "the hut of the bearded well," a somewhat singular title, to say the least,) is so strong and complete as to render necessary the few words of dedication, where, in inscribing the poem, (or, as the author terms it, "trifle,") to his "long-vacation pupils," he expresses a hope, that they "will not be displeased if, in a fiction, purely fiction, they are here and there reminded of times enjoyed together."

As the story opens, the Oxford party are about to proceed to dinner at "the place of the Clansmen's meeting." Their characters, discriminated with the nicest taste, and perfectly worked out, are thus introduced:

"Be it recorded in song who was first, who last, in dressing.
Hope was the first, black-tied, white-waistcoated, simple, his Honor;
For the postman made out he was son to the Earl of Ilay,
(As, indeed, he was to the younger brother, the Colonel);
Treated him therefore with special respect, doffed bonnet, and ever
Called him his Honor: his Honor he therefore was at the cottage;
Always his Honor at least, sometimes the Viscount of Ilay.

"Hope was the first, his Honor; and, next to his Honor, the Tutor.
Still more plain the tutor, the grave man nicknamed Adam,
White-tied, clerical, silent, with antique square-cut waistcoat,
Formal, unchanged, of black cloth, but with sense and feeling beneath it;
Skilful in ethics and logic, in Pindar and poets unrivalled;
Shady in Latin, said Lindsay, but *topping* in plays and Aldrich.

"Somewhat more splendid in dress, in a waistcoat work of a lady,
Lindsay succeeded, the lively, the cheery, cigar-loving Lindsay,
Lindsay the ready of speech, the Piper, the Dialectician:
This was his title from Adam, because of the words he invented,
Who in three weeks had created a dialect new for the party.

"Hewson and Hobbes were down at the *matutine* bathing; of course
Arthur Audley, the bather *par excellence* glory of headers:
Arthur they called him for love and for euphony: so were they bathing
There where in mornings was custom, where, over a ledge of granite,
Into a granite bason descended the amber torrent.
There were they bathing and dressing: it was but a step from the cot-tage,
Only the road and larches and ruinous millstead between.
Hewson and Hobbes followed quick upon Adam; on them followed Arthur.

"Airlie descended the last, splendescent as god of Olympus.
When for ten minutes already the fourwheel had stood at the gateway;
He, like a god, came leaving his ample Olympian chamber."—pp. 5, 6.

A peculiar point of style in this poem, and one which gives a certain classic character to some of its more familiar aspects, is the frequent recurrence of the same line, and the repeated definition of a personage

by the same attributes. Thus, Lindsay is "the Piper, the Dialectician," Arthur Audley "the glory of headers," and the tutor "the grave man nicknamed Adam," from beginning to end; and so also of the others.

Omitting the after-dinner speeches, with their

"Long constructions strange and plusquam-Thucydidean,"

that only of "Sir Hector, the Chief and the Chairman;" in honor of the Oxonians, than which nothing could be more unpoetically truthful, is preserved, with the acknowledgment, ending in a sarcasm at the game laws, by Hewson, who, as he is leaving the room, is accosted by "a thin man, clad as the Saxon:"

"'Young man, if ye pass thro' the Braes o'Lochaber,
See by the Loch-side ye come to the Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich.'"—p. 9.

Throughout this scene, as through the whole book, no opportunity is overlooked for giving individuality to the persons introduced: Sir Hector, of whom we lose sight henceforward, the attaché, the Guardsman, are not mere names, but characters: it is not enough to say that two tables were set apart "for keeper and gillie and peasant:" there is something to be added yet; and with others assembled around them were

"Pipers five or six; *among them the young one, the drunkard.*"

The morrow's conversation of the reading party turns on "noble ladies and rustic girls, their partners." And here speaks out Hewson the chartist:

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

"'Never (of course you will laugh, but of course all the same I shall say it,)
Never, believe me, revealed itself to me the sexual glory,
Till, in some village fields, in holidays now getting stupid,
One day sauntering long and listless, as Tennyson has it,
Long and listless strolling, ungainly in hobbydihoyhood,
Chanced it my eye fell aside on a capless bonnetless maiden,
Bending with three-pronged fork in a garden uprooting potatoes.
Was it the air? who can say? or herself? or the charm of the labor?
But a new thing was in me, and longing delicious possessed me,
Longing to take her and lift her, and put her away from her slaving.
Was it to clasp her in lifting, or was it to lift her by clasping,
Was it embracing or aiding was most in my mind? Hard question.
But a new thing was in me: I too was a youth among maidens.
Was it the air? who can say? But, in part, 'twas the charm of the [labor.'"

And he proceeds in a rapture of talk on the beauty of household service.

Hereat Arthur remarks:

"'Is not all this just the same that one hears at common room [breakfasts,
Or perhaps Trinity-wines, about Gothic buildings and beauty?'"
—p. 13.

The character of Hobbes, called into energy by this observation, is perfectly developed in the lines succeeding:

" And with a start from the sofa came Hobbes; with a cry from the sofa,
There where he lay, the great Hobbes, contemplative, corpulent, witty;
Author forgotten and silent of currentest phrase and fancy;
Mute and exuberant by turns, a fountain at intervals playing,
Mute and abstracted, or strong and abundant as rain in the tropics;
Studious; careless of dress; inobservant; by smooth persuasions
Lately decoyed into kilt on example of Hope and the Piper,
Hope an Antinous mere, Hyperion of calves the Piper. . . . .
" 'Ah! could they only be taught,' he resumed, 'by a Pugin of women
How even churning and washing, the dairy, the scullery duties,
Wait but a touch to redeem and convert them to charms and attractions;
Scrubbing requires for true grace but frank and artistical handling,
And the removal of slops to be ornamentally treated!"—pp. 13, 14.

Here, in the tutor's answer to Hewson, we come on the moral of the poem, a moral to be pursued through commonplace lowliness of station and through high rank, into the habit of life which would be, in the one, not petty,—in the other, not overweening,—in any, calm and dignified.

" 'You are a boy; when you grow a man, you'll find things alter.
You will learn to seek the good, to scorn the attractive,
Scorn all mere cosmetics, as now of rank and fashion,
Delicate hands, and wealth, so then of poverty also,
Poverty truly attractive, more truly, I bear you witness.
Good, wherever found, you will choose, be it humble or stately,
Happy if only you find, and, finding, do not lose it.' "—p. 14.

When the discussion is ended, the party propose to separate, some proceeding on their tour; and Philip Hewson will be of these.

" 'Finally, too,' from the kilt and the sofa said Hobbes in conclusion,
'Finally Philip must hunt for that home of the probable poacher,
Hid in the Braes of Lochaber, the Bothie of what-did-he-call-it.
Hopeless of you and of us, of gillies and marquises hopeless,
Weary of ethic and logic, of rhetoric yet more weary,
There shall he, smit by the charm of a lovely potatoe-uprooter,
Study the question of sex in the Bothie of what-did-he-call-it." '—
[p. 18.

The action here becomes divided; and, omitting points of detail, we must confine ourselves to tracing the development of the idea in which the subject of the poem consists.

Philip and his companions, losing their road, are received at a farm, where they stay for three days: and his experience of himself begins. He comes prepared; and, if he seems to love the "golden-haired Katie," it is less that she is "the youngest and comeliest daughter" than because of her position, and that in that she realises his preconceived wishes. For three days he is with her and about her; and he

remains when his friends leave the farm-house. But his love is no more than the consequence of his principles; it is his own will unconsidered and but half understood. And a letter to Adam tells how it had an end:

"'I was walking along some two miles from the cottage,
Full of my dreamings. A girl went by in a party with others:
She had a cloak on,—was stepping on quickly, for rain was beginning;
But, as she passed, from the hood I saw her eyes glance at me:—
So quick a glance, so regardless I, that, altho' I felt it,
You couldn't properly say our eyes met; she cast it, and left it.
It was three minutes, perhaps, ere I knew what it was. I had seen her
Somewhere before, I am sure; but that wasn't it,—not its import.
No; it had seemed to regard me with simple superior insight,
Quietly saying to herself: 'Yes, there he is still in his fancy. . . . . .
Doesn't yet see we have here just the things he is used to elsewhere,
And that the things he likes here, elsewhere he wouldn't have looked at;
People here, too, are people, and not as fairy-land creatures.
He is in a trance, and possessed,—I wonder how long to continue.
It is a shame and pity,—and no good likely to follow.'—
Something like this; but, indeed, I cannot the least define it.
Only, three hours thence, I was off and away in the moor-land,
Hiding myself from myself, if I could, the arrow within me.'"—p. 29.

Philip Hewson has been going on

"Even as cloud passing subtly unseen from mountain to mountain,
Leaving the crest of Benmore to be palpable next on Benvohrlich,
Or like to hawk of the hill, which ranges and soars in its hunting,
Seen and unseen by turns." . . . . . And these are his words in the [mountains: . . . . . .

"'Surely the force that here sweeps me along in its violent impulse,
Surely my strength shall be in her, my help and protection about her,
Surely in inner-sweet gladness and vigor of joy shall sustain her;
Till, the brief winter o'erpast, her own true sap in the springtide
Rise, and the tree I have bared be verdurous e'en as aforetime:
Surely it may be, it should be, it must be. Yet, ever and ever,
'Would I were dead,' I keep saying, 'that so I could go and uphold [her.'"—pp. 26, 27.

And, meanwhile, Katie, among the others, is dancing and smiling still on some one who is to her all that Philip had ever been.

When Hewson writes next, his experience has reached its second stage. He is at Balloch, with the aunt and the cousin of his friend Hope: and the lady Maria has made his beliefs begin to fail and totter, and he feels for something to hold firmly. He seems to think, at one moment, that the mere knowledge of the existence of such an one ought to compensate for lives of drudgery hemmed in with want; then he turns round on himself with, "How shall that be?" And, at length, he appeases his questions, saying that it must and should be so, if it is.

After this, come scraps of letters, crossed and recrossed, from the

Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich. In his travelling towards home, a horse cast a shoe, and they were directed to David Mackaye. Hewson is still in the clachan hard by when he urges his friend to come to him: and he comes.

"There on the blank hill-side, looking down through the loch to the ocean;
There, with a runnel beside, and pine-trees twain before it,
There, with the road underneath, and in sight of coaches and steamers,
Dwelling of David Mackaye and his daughters, Elspie and Bella,
Sends up a column of smoke the Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich. . . . .

"So on the road they walk, by the shore of the salt sea-water,
Silent a youth and maid, and elders twain conversing."—pp. 36, 37.

"Ten more days, with Adam, did Philip abide at the changehouse;
Ten more nights they met, they walked with father and daughter.
Ten more nights; and, night by night, more distant away were
Philip and she; every night less heedful, by habit, the father.—pp. 38, 39.

From this point, we must give ourselves up to quotation; and the narrow space remaining to us is our only apology to the reader for making any omission whatever in these extracts.

"For she confessed, as they sat in the dusk, and he saw not her blushes,
Elspie confessed, at the sports, long ago, with her father, she saw him,
When at the door the old man had told him the name of the Bothie;
There, after that, at the dance; yet again at the dance in Rannoch;
And she was silent, confused. Confused much rather Philip
Buried his face in his hands, his face that with blood was bursting.
Silent, confused; yet by pity she conquered her fear, and continued:
'Katie is good and not silly: be comforted, Sir, about her;
Katie is good and not silly; tender, but not, like many,
Carrying off, and at once, for fear of being seen, in the bosom
Locking up as in a cupboard, the pleasure that any man gives them,
Keeping it out of sight as a prize they need be ashamed of:
That is the way, I think, Sir, in England more than in Scotland.
No; she lives and takes pleasure in all, as in beautiful weather;
Sorry to lose it; but just as we would be to lose fine weather. . . . .
There were at least five or six,—not there; no, that I don't say,
But in the country about,—you might just as well have been courting.
That was what gave me much pain; and (you won't remember that tho'),
Three days after, I met you, beside my Uncle's walking;
And I was wondering much, and hoped you wouldn't notice;
So, as I passed, I couldn't help looking. You didn't know me;
But I was glad when I heard, next day, you were gone to the teacher.'

"And, uplifting his face at last, with eyes dilated,
Large as great stars in mist, and dim with dabbled lashes,
Philip, with new tears starting,
'You think I do not remember,'
Said, 'suppose that I did not observe. Ah me! shall I tell you?
Elspie, it was your look that sent me away from Rannoch.' . . . .
And he continued more firmly, altho' with stronger emotion.
'Elspie, why should I speak it? You cannot believe it, and should not.
Why should I say that I love, which I all but said to another?

Yet, should I dare, should I say, Oh Elspie you only I love, you,
First and sole in my life that has been, and surely that shall be;
Could, oh could, you believe it, oh Elspie, believe it, and spurn not?
Is it possible,—possible, Elspie?'

'Well,' she answered,
Quietly, after her fashion, still knitting; 'Well, I think of it.
Yes, I don't know, Mr. Philip; but only it feels to me strangely,—
Like to the high new bridge they used to build at, below there,
Over the burn and glen, on the road. You won't understand me. . . . .
Sometimes I find myself dreaming at nights about arches and bridges;
Sometimes I dream of a great invisible hand coming down, and
Dropping the great key-stone in the middle.' . . . .

"But while she was speaking,—
So it happened,—a moment she paused from her work, and, pondering,
Laid her hand on her lap. Philip took it, she did not resist.
So he retained her fingers, the knitting being stopped. But emotion
Came all over her more and more, from his hand, from her heart, and
Most from the sweet idea and image her brain was renewing.
So he retained her hand, and, his tears down-dropping on it,
Trembling a long time, kissed it at last: and she ended.
And, as she ended, up rose he, saying: 'What have I heard? Oh!
What have I done, that such words should be said to me? Oh! I see it,
See the great key-stone coming down from the heaven of heavens.'
And he fell at her feet, and buried his face in her apron.
"But, as, under the moon and stars, they went to the cottage,
Elspie sighed and said: 'Be patient, dear Mr. Philip;
Do not do anything hasty. It is all so soon, so sudden.
Do not say anything yet to any one.'

'Elspie,' he answered,
"Does not my friend go on Friday? I then shall see nothing of you:
Do not I myself go on Monday? 'But oh!' he said, 'Elspie,
Do as I bid you, my child; do not go on calling me *Mr.*
Might I not just as well be calling you *Miss Elspie*?
Call me, this heavenly night, for once, for the first time, Philip.'
"'Philip,' she said, and laughed, and said she could not say it.
'Philip,' she said. He turned, and kissed the sweet lips as they said it.
"But, on the morrow, Elspie kept out of the way of Philip;
And, at the evening seat, when he took her hand by the alders,
Drew it back, saying, almost peevishly:

"'No, Mr. Philip;
I was quite right last night: it is too soon, too sudden,
What I told you before was foolish, perhaps,—was hasty.
When I think it over, I am shocked and terrified at it.'" . . . .
"Ere she had spoken two words, had Philip released her fingers;
As she went on, he recoiled, fell back, and shook, and shivered.
There he stood, looking pale and ghastly; when she had ended,
Answering in hollow voice:

"'It is true; oh! quite true, Elspie.
Oh! you are always right; oh! what, what, have I been doing?
I will depart to-morrow. But oh! forget me not wholly,
Wholly, Elspie, nor hate me; no, do not hate me, my Elspie'"

"But a revulsion passed thro' the brain and bosom of Elspie;
And she got up from her seat on the rock, putting by her knitting,
Went to him where he stood, and answered:

"'No, Mr. Philip:
No; you are good, Mr. Philip, and gentle; and I am the foolish:
No, Mr. Philip; forgive me.'

"She stepped right to him, and boldly
Took up his hand, and placed it in her's, he daring no movement;
Took up the cold hanging hand, up-forcing the heavy elbow.
'I am afraid,' she said; 'but I will;' and kissed the fingers.
And he fell on his knees, and kissed her own past counting. . . . . .
"As he was kissing her fingers, and knelt on the ground before her,
Yielding, backward she sank to her seat, and, of what she was doing
Ignorant, bewildered, in sweet multitudinous vague emotion,
Stooping, knowing not what, put her lips to the curl on his forehead.
And Philip, raising himself, gently, for the first time, round her
Passing his arms, close, close, enfolded her close to his bosom.
"As they went home by the moon, 'Forgive me, Philip,' she whispered:
'I have so many things to talk of all of a sudden,
I who had never once thought a thing in my ignorant Highlands.'"—
[pp. 39-44.

We may spare criticism here, for what reader will not have felt such poetry? There is something in this of the very tenderness of tenderness; this is true delicacy, fearless and unembarrassed. Here it seems almost captious to object: perhaps, indeed, it is rather personal whim than legitimate criticism which makes us take some exception at "the curl on his forehead;" yet somehow there seems a hint in it of the pet curate.

Elspie's doubts now return upon her with increased force; and it is not till after many conversations with the "teacher" that she allows her resolve to be fixed. So, at last,

"There, upon Saturday eve, in the gorgeous bright October,
Under the alders knitting, gave Elspie her troth to Philip."

And, after their talk, she feels strong again, and fit to be his.—Then they rise.

"'But we must go, Mr. Philip.'

"'I shall not go at all,' said
He, 'if you call me *Mr.* Thank Heaven! that's well over!'
"'No, but it's not,' she said; 'it is not over, nor will be.
Was it not, then,' she asked, 'the name I called you first by?
No, Mr. Philip, no. You have kissed me enough for two nights.
No.—Come, Philip, come, or I'll go myself without you.' [47, 48.
"'You never call me Philip,' he answered, 'until I kiss you.'"—pp.

David Mackaye gives his consent; but first Hewson must return to College, and study for a year.

His views have not been stationary. To his old scorn for the idle of

the earth had succeeded the surprise that overtook him at Balloch: and he would now hold to his creed, yet not as rejecting his experience. Some, he says, were made for use; others for ornament; but let these be so *made*, of a truth, and not such as find themselves merely thrust into exemption from labor. Let each know his place, and take it,

"For it is beautiful only to do the thing we are meant for."

And of his friend urging Providence he can only, while answering that doubtless he must be in the right, ask where the limit comes between circumstance and Providence, and can but wish for a great cause, and the trumpet that should call him to God's battle, whereas he sees

"Only infinite jumble and mess and dislocation,
Backed by a solemn appeal, 'For God's sake, do not stir there.'"

And the year is now out.

"Philip returned to his books, but returned to his Highlands after. . . .
There in the bright October, the gorgeous bright October,
When the brackens are changed, and heather blooms are faded,
And, amid russet of heather and fern, green trees are bonnie,
There, when shearing had ended, and barley-stooks were garnered,
David gave Philip to wife his daughter, his darling Elspie;
Elspie, the quiet, the brave, was wedded to Philip, the poet. . . . .
So won Philip his bride. They are married, and gone to New Zealand.
Five hundred pounds in pocket, with books and two or three pictures,
Tool-box, plough, and the rest, they rounded the sphere to New Zealand.
There he hewed and dug; subdued the earth and his spirit."—pp. 52-55.

Among the prominent attributes of this poem is its completeness. The elaboration, not only of character and of mental discipline, but of incident also, is unbroken. The absence of all mention of Elspie in the opening scene and again at the dance at Rannoch may at first seem to be a failure in this respect; but second thoughts will show it to be far otherwise: for, in the former case, her presence would not have had any significance for Hewson, and, in the latter, would have been overlooked by him save so far as might warrant a future vague recollection, pre-occupied as his eyes and thoughts were by another. There is one condition still under which we have as yet had little opportunity of displaying this quality; but it will be found to be as fully carried out in the descriptions of nature. In the first of our extracts the words are few, but stand for many.

"Meäly glen, the heart of Lochiel's fair forest,
Where Scotch firs are darkest and amplest, and intermingle
Grandly with rowan and ash;—in Mar you have no ashes;
There the pine is alone or relieved by birch and alder."—p. 22.

In the next the mere sound and the names go far towards the entire effect; but not so far as to induce any negligence in essential details:

"As, at return of tide, the total weight of ocean,
Drawn by moon and sun from Labrador and Greenland,

Sets in amain in the open space betwixt Mull and Scarfa,
Heaving, swelling, spreading, the might of the mighty Atlantic;
There into cranny and slit of the rocky cavernous bottom
Settles down; and with dimples huge the smooth sea-surface
Eddies, coils, and whirls, by dangerous Corryvreckan."—p. 52.

Two more passages, and they must suffice as examples. Here the isolation is perfect; but it is the isolation, not of the place and the actors only; it is, as it were, almost our own in an equal degree;

"Ourselves too seeming
Not as spectators, accepted into it, immingled, as truly
Part of it as are the kine in the field lying there by the birches."
"There, across the great rocky wharves a wooden bridge goes,
Carrying a path to the forest; below,—three hundred yards, say,—
Lower in level some twenty-five feet, thro' flats of shingle,
Stepping-stones and a cart-track cross in the open valley.
But, in the interval here, the boiling pent-up water
Frees itself by a final descent, attaining a bason
Ten feet wide and eighteen long, with whiteness and fury
Occupied partly, but mostly pellucid, pure, a mirror;
Beautiful there for the color derived from green rocks under;
Beautiful most of all where beads of foam uprising
Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of the stillness.
Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendent birch-boughs,
Here it lies, unthought of above at the bridge and pathway,
Still more concealed from below by wood and rocky projection.
You are shut in, left alone with yourself and perfection of water,
Hid on all sides, left alone with yourself and the goddess of bathing."—
"So they bathed, they read, they roamed in glen and forest;
Far amid blackest pines to the waterfall they shadow,
Far up the long long glen to the loch, and the loch beyond it
Deep under huge red cliffs, a secret."

In many of the images of this poem, as also in the volume "Ambarvalia," the joint production of Clough and Thomas Burbidge, there is a peculiar modernness, a reference distinctly to the means and habits of society in these days, a recognition of every-day fact, and a willingness to believe it as capable of poetry as that which, but for having once been fact, would not now be tradition. There is a certain special character in passages like the following, the familiarity of the matter blending with the remoteness of the form of metre, such as should not be overlooked in attempting to estimate the author's mind and views of art:

"Still, as before (and as now), balls, dances, and evening parties, ...
Seemed like a sort of unnatural up-in-the-air balloon work, ...
As mere gratuitous trifling in presence of business and duty
As does the turning aside of the tourist to look at a landscape
Seem in the steamer or coach to the merchant in haste for the city."—
[p. 12.

"I was as one that sleeps on the railway; one who, dreaming,

Hears thro' his dream the name of his home shouted out,—hears, and
[hears not,
Faint, and louder again, and less loud, dying in distance,—
Dimly conscious, with something of inward debate and choice, and
Sense of [present] claim and reality present; relapses,
Nevertheless, and continues the dream and fancy, while forward,
Swiftly, remorseless, the ear presses on, he knows not whither."—p. 38.

Indeed, the general adaptation of the style to the immediate matter, the alternation of the poetic and the familiar, with a certain mixture even of classical phrase and allusion, is highly appropriate, and may almost be termed constant, except in occasional instances where more poetry, and especially more conception and working out of images, is introduced than squares with a strict observance of nature. Thus the lines quoted where Elspie applies to herself the incident of "the high new bridge" and "the great key-stone in the middle" are succeeded by others (omitted in our extract) where the idea is followed into its details; and there is another passage in which, through no less than seventeen lines, she compares herself to an inland stream disturbed and hurried on by the mingling with it of the sea's tide. Thus also one of the most elaborate descriptions in the poem,—an episode in itself of the extremest beauty and finish, but, as we think, clearly misplaced,—is a picture of the dawn over a great city, introduced into a letter of Philip's, and that, too, simply as an image of his own mental condition. There are but few poets for whom it would be superfluous to reflect whether pieces of such-like mere poetry might not more properly form part of the descriptive groundwork, and be altogether banished from discourse and conversation, where the greater amount of their intrinsic care and excellence becomes, by its position, a proportionally increasing load of disregard for truthfulness.

For a specimen of a peculiarly noble spirit which pervades the whole work, we would refer the reader to the character of Arthur Audley, unnecessary to the story, but most important to the sentiment; for a comprehensive instance of minute feeling for individuality, to the narrative of Lindsay and the corrections of Arthur on returning from their tour.

"He to the great *might have been* upsoaring, sublime and ideal;
He to the merest *it was* restricting, diminishing, dwarfing;"

For pleasant ingenuity, involving, too, a point of character, to the final letter of Hobbes to Philip, wherein, in a manner made up of playful subtlety and real poetical feeling, he proves how "this Rachel and Leah is marriage."

"The Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich" will not, it is to be feared, be extensively read; its length combined with the metre in which it is written, or indeed a first hasty glance at the contents, does not allure the

majority even of poetical readers; but it will not be left or forgotten by such as fairly enter upon it. This is a poem essentially thought and studied, if not while in the act of writing, at least as the result of a condition of mind; and the author owes it to the appreciations of all into whose hands it shall come, and who are willing to judge for themselves, to call it, should a second edition appear, by its true name;—not a trifle, but a work.

That public attention should have been so little engaged by this poem is a fact in one respect somewhat remarkable, as contrasting with the notice which the "Ambarvalia" has received. Nevertheless, independently of the greater importance of "the Bothie" in length and development, it must, we think, be admitted to be written on sounder and more matured principles of taste,—the style being sufficiently characterized and distinctive without special prominence, whereas not a few of the poems in the other volume are examples rather of style than of thought, and might be held in recollection on account of the former quality alone.

Her First Season.

(Sonnet.)

He gazed her over, from her eyebrows down
Even to her feet: he gazed so with the good
Undoubting faith of fools, much as who should
Accost God for a comrade. In the brown
Of all her curls he seemed to think the town
Would make an acquisition; but her hood
Was not the newest fashion, and his brood
Of lady-friends might scarce approve her gown.
If I did smile, 'twas faintly; for my cheeks
Burned, thinking she'd be shown up to be sold,
And cried about, in the thick jostling run
Of the loud world, till all the weary weeks
Should bring her back to herself and to the old
Familiar face of nature and the sun.

A Sketch from Nature.

The air blows pure, for twenty miles,
  Over this vast countrié :
Over hill and wood and vale, it goeth,
  Over steeple, and stack, and tree :
And there's not a bird on the wind but knoweth
  How sweet these meadows be.

The swallows are flying beside the wood,
  And the corbies are hoarsely crying ;
And the sun at the end of the earth hath stood,
And, thorough the hedge and over the road,
  On the grassy slope is lying :
And the sheep are taking their supper-food
  While yet the rays are dying.

Sleepy shadows are filling the furrows,
  And giant-long shadows the trees are making ;
And velvet soft are the woodland tufts,
And misty-gray the low-down crofts ;
But the aspens there have gold-green tops,
  And the gold-green tops are shaking :
The spires are white in the sun's last light ;—
And yet a moment ere he drops,
Gazes the sun on the golden slopes.

Two sheep, afar from fold,
  Are on the hill-side straying,
With backs all silver, breasts all gold :
  The merle is something saying,
Something very very sweet :—
  ' The day—the day—the day is done :'
There answereth a single bleat—
The air is cold, the sky is dimming,
And clouds are long like fishes swimming.

Sydenham Wood, 1849.

An End.

Love, strong as death, is dead.
Come, let us make his bed
  Among the dying flowers:
A green turf at his head;
And a stone at his feet,
Whereon we may sit
  In the quiet evening hours.

He was born in the spring,
And died before the harvesting.
  On the last warm summer day
  He left us;—he would not stay
  For autumn twilight cold and grey
Sit we by his grave and sing
  He is gone away.

To few chords, and sad, and low,
  Sing we so.
Be our eyes fixed on the grass,
Shadow-veiled, as the years pass,
While we think of all that was
  In the long ago.

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